

**McCue, Kevin**

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**Cc:** z@wildrockies.org; McCue, Kevin  
**Subject:** Testimony on SB 212

Dear Chairman John Brenden and members of the Fish and Game Committee,

On behalf of Buffalo Field Campaign I am submitting testimony on SB 212. Please share my testimony with **Senator John Brenden** and **Senator Jim Shockley** whom I do not have contacts for. I would also request that my testimony be entered into the hearing record and transcript. Thank you.

Buffalo Field Campaign is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) whose mission is to stop the slaughter of Yellowstone's wild buffalo herd, protect the natural habitat of wild free-roaming buffalo and native wildlife, and to work with people of all Nations to honor the sacredness of the wild buffalo.

Our members, who come from all walks of life and from places all around the world, envision a life for buffalo in which they thrive within a state of inherent wildness. We also envision a world in which buffalo and all other native wildlife are given precedence on public land, and where buffalo herds remain as a self-regulating sustainable population, and a viable genetic source for the future evolutionary potential of the wildlife species.

I am also a resident of West Yellowstone and live year-round in the Hebgen basin where America's last wild buffalo roam.

Buffalo Field Campaign is adamantly opposed to SB 212 and all of its provisions, for many reasons.

SB 212 would legislate the ecologically extinction of wild American bison in Montana by mandating Fish, Wildlife & Parks adopting a plan for domestication of any wild buffalo released onto private or public lands in Montana.

SB 212 dictates the plan MUST include animal identification, tracking and containment measures - fencing and removal methods - in "designated areas" and makes Fish, Wildlife & Parks liable for any costs incurred for damages to private property.

It is not socially or morally acceptable for Americans and Montanans to sanction the extinction of a valued wildlife species, and it is certainly wrong for the Montana legislature to commit such acts into law.

The prevalence of fenced, domesticated buffalo as livestock is widespread in North America; only one population of migratory wild buffalo remains in Montana.

Buffalo descended from the Yellowstone population are a gift to our Nation and natural heritage. We have a duty to future generations committing ourselves to the conservation, preservation and restoration of the wild American buffalo in Montana today.

Under SB 212, Fish, Wildlife & Parks "may not release or transplant wild buffalo or bison on state or federal land in Montana if the relocation or transplantation would negatively affect any existing multiple use of the land, including livestock grazing."

SB 212 stands the facts on their head.

The prevalence of livestock grazing has precluded the multiple use of public lands in Montana by preventing the keystone species, the wild American buffalo, from fulfilling their ecological roles in keeping grasslands healthy, diverse and functioning.

The wild American buffalo has been missing from Montana's landscape for well over 100 years. It's time for Montanans to make a generational commitment to conserve, protect and restore wild buffalo in their native habitats for the next 100 years to come.

Thank you for taking action to protect America's last wild buffalo as a valued wildlife species freely roaming Montana by voting to defeat SB 212.

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